

London Summit Meeting

Included in his evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee, Chief Buthelezi described in detail the London meeting in 1979 between Inkatha and the ANC Mission in Exile.

"After four years of sending emissaries abroad, the time seemed ripe for a top level meeting. The first such meeting took place in Stockholm in the early part of 1979 . . . that meeting was then used as a consultative meeting to establish a summit conference between Inkatha and the ANC Mission in Exile which took place in London in October 1979.

"Mr Oliver Tambo attended the meeting (which was chaired by Dr A H Zulu, the Speaker of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly) and I had to spend over R30 000 of Inkatha's money, obtained from workers and peasants, to make sure that the Inkatha contingent was top level and representative of the movement.

"I took that meeting very

seriously. I have a memorandum which I presented for discussion at that meeting but do not make it available to the Parliamentary Select Committee because Mr Tambo and I agreed to make it confidential until he came back with a response to me. (This he has not done.)

"I went to London determined to seek reconciliation and determined to bring about a working relationship between the ANC Mission in Exile and Inkatha.

"I was right in maintaining that this was a real possibility . . . I was aware of the fact that Mr Oliver Tambo was having difficulties with some elements of his organisation. Those with a single bloody-minded commitment to violence did not want any evidence that non-violent tactics and strategies were viable in South Africa.

"Their propaganda was that nothing could be done other than through violence and they were threatened by the steadily increasing evidence that Inkatha's tactics and strategies were moving ever more closer to the South African political centre of gravity . . .

"In all my discussions with the ANC Mission in Exile I was adamant that Inkatha should remain Inkatha and that it should remain committed to the black popular will which expressed itself in Inkatha's massive membership and was articulated through its democratic machinery.

"The fact that Inkatha's membership doubled in 1977 and again doubled in 1978 is in itself indisputable proof that those in the mainstream of black politics in South Africa rejected violence as the primary means of bringing about change.

"It was Inkatha's growing prominence even in the early years of its existence and the evidence of its mass support which was frightening to the militants in the ANC Mission in Exile.

"They wanted Inkatha crushed if it could not be subdued into being subservient to the Mission in Exile.

"Any group in exile which commits itself to the armed struggle resists sharing power . . . The ANC Mission in Exile regiments its members ideologically and inculcates in them the view that only the ANC Mission in Exile can be allowed to make decisions and to direct the affairs of the struggle for liberation . . .

"When we met in London . . . we did so under this background of forces in the Mission in Exile which subsequent history proved Mr Tambo could not control.

"After the London meeting, in 1980 Mr Tambo, for the first time in his career, began criticising me publicly . . . he had sided with those who saw Inkatha as a threat and wanted no evidence that black democratic opposition and black non-violent tactics and strategies were powerful forces for bringing about change . . ."

would be foolish for black South Africans to model their liberation struggle on struggles elsewhere, where circumstances were entirely different.

"Anyone with even a modicum of military sense realises that the nature of the South African terrain is such that no liberated zones can be established and that the transportation of men and

weapons on a scale sufficient to mount a serious onslaught against apartheid presents formidable logistic problems."

He said the ANC Mission in Exile had failed to mount a viable armed struggle for a quarter of a century.

"Again, anyone with a modicum of military sense would know that the employment of violence in

South Africa would necessarily have to take the form of a bloody civil war."

Having failed to mount a viable armed struggle, the ANC Mission in Exile had recognised it had to change tactics. It was now attempting to make South Africa ungovernable by establishing the conditions for a bloody civil war.